UNITED NATIONS

A S

General Assembly Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/47/82
S/23512
5 February 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-seventh session
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION
REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTREIS
EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT
ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
NARCOTIC DRUGS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-seventh year

Letter dated 30 January 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Colombo Declaration issued at the Sixth Meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), held at Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 21 December 1991 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex is circulated as an official document of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under the items entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council", "Question of Palestine", "Policies of apartheid of the Government of

South Africa", "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", "Development and international economic cooperation", "Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development", "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind", "International cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries", "External debt crisis and development", "Advancement of women", "Narcotic drugs" and "Human rights questions", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Stanley KALPAGE
Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka
to the United Nations

ANNEX

# COLOMBO DECLARATION

## The Colombo Declaration of the Heads of State or Government of the Member Countries of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation issued on 21st December 1991

### INTRODUCTION

1. The Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia; the King of Bhutan, His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck; the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, His Excellency Shri Narasimha Rao; the President of the Republic of Maldives, His Excellency Mr Maumoon Abdul Gayoom; the Prime Minister of Nepal, the Rt. Hon. Girija Prasad Koirala; the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, His Excellency Mian Mohammed Nawaz Sharif and the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Ranasinghe Premadasa met at the Sixth Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) at Colombo, Sri Lanka on 21st December, 1991.

### REGIONAL COOPERATION

2. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their commitment to the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter of SAARC. They resolved to promote regional cooperation for the benefit of their people, in a spirit of mutual accommodation, with full respect for the principles of sovereign equality, independence and territorial integrity of all States and in strict adherence to the principles of non-use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. They also reiterated their commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Non- aligned Movement.

### INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES

3. The Heads of State or Government emphasised the vital importance of assessing the nature and extent of international economic inter-dependence and of the need for reviving the North/South dialogue. They noted the recent developments that had radically transformed the international development relationship deeply affecting the prospects for the economies of the seven SAARC countries. The Heads of State or

Government emphasised the need for vigorously promoting South-South economic cooperation to off-set the negative consequences of international economic developments.

4. The Heads of State or Government also exchanged views on the priorities of their respective national economies. They identified, for the further development of their economies, the importance of securing less restrictive trading and marketing opportunities for their products, more extensive technology and resource transfers to South Asia, debt relief and access on favourable and on more concessional terms to resources from multilateral financial institutions. They agreed to keep an open dialogue on these aspects through mutual consultations.

**INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

5. The Heads of State or Government assessed current international developments in the political sphere particularly those that affected the lives of the people of South Asia. They noted the changing power structures in international relations and the reduction of confrontations and tensions, particularly among the Super Powers. These have contributed to the receding of the threat of nuclear confrontation and to agreements on disarmament measures. The Heads of State or Government hoped that these developments would restrain the pursuit of military power in all areas of the world. They expressed the hope that the peace dividend would be used for promoting further development of developing countries. They welcomed the trend towards popularly based democratic governments in different parts of the world including in South Asia.

6. The Heads of State or Government observed however that some political issues in particular the Palestine question, the final elimination of Apartheid as well as other problems remained unresolved despite efforts towards their settlement.

7. In regard to human rights, the Heads of State or Government observed that civil and political rights on the one hand and economic and social rights on the other are inter-dependent and of equal importance. Human rights issues should not therefore be viewed in narrow and exclusively political terms. In this context they underlined the need to view the efforts of States to guarantee human rights in their full context, through the pursuit of development for all citizens in conditions of stability, which in turn guarantees the enjoyment of human rights of all persons.

8. The Heads of State or Government while reaffirming their commitment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law, emphasised the need to ensure that development remains at the centre of international attention.

9. The Heads of State or Government agreed to participate in the on-going process of revitalising the United Nations as an effective universal instrument for addressing international issues on an equitable and democratic basis, taking full account of the interests and concerns of all states, including those in South Asia. Issues such as the protection and preservation of the environment and the equitable and sustainable management of global resources, economic development and the alleviation of poverty, the suppression of terrorism, drug trafficking and other international crimes required global responses and solutions calling for action by all states.

**PROJECTION OF COLLECTIVE POSITIONS**

10. In the context of the SAARC Charter-objective to strengthen cooperation among member-states in international fora, the Heads of State or Government resolved to encourage consultations among delegations of SAARC countries at all international fora and to promote articulation of joint positions where such action would be in the interests of all. They felt that the development of a collective position in international fora would accord them greater credibility and enhance the international profile of South Asia.

**STRENGTHENING OF SAARC**

11. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the Report presented by the Chairman of the Fifth SAARC Summit, the President of Maldives, and the Head of Government of Bangladesh on the adoption of a more businesslike and functional approach in the conduct of SAARC meetings, as well as the Report submitted by the Chairman of the Ninth Session of the Council of Ministers, the Foreign Minister of Maldives, on rationalizing SAARC activities. The Heads of State or Government also considered other proposals submitted by Member-States and by the Secretariat to make the Association a more effective instrument for the realisation of the aspirations of the people of South Asia.

12. They decided that the Standing Committee should meet in special session in Colombo in April 1992 in order to collate and study all proposals and comments in this respect and to submit a report with its recommendations to the Eleventh Session of the Council of Ministers.

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

13. The Heads of State or Government re-emphasised that regional self-reliance should be resolutely promoted through closer cooperation among countries of the Association and that this would help mitigate the adverse consequences of negative international developments operating against them.

14. The Heads of State or Government requested the Standing Committee at its Special Session to study the question of cooperation between SAARC and appropriate international and regional organizations taking into account the evolution of SAARC activities in the core economic areas and to report to the Eleventh Session of the Council of Ministers.

**INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

15. The Heads of State or Government noted the progress made by the Integrated Programme of Action (IPA) in expanding to cover a number of sectors crucial for the economic and social progress of the peoples of South Asia. They were of the view that the challenge facing the IPA was to achieve its identified targets within specific time periods. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the proposals made and the discussions proceeding in SAARC to heighten the effectiveness of the IPA.

**POVERTY ALLEVIATION**

16. The Heads of State or Government accorded the highest priority to the alleviation of poverty in all South Asian countries. They affirmed that South Asia's poor could constitute a huge and potential resource, provided their basic needs were met, and they were mobilized to create economic growth. This requires that the poor are empowered and are irreversibly linked to the mainstream of development. It was noted that each South Asian country has had significant success cases of this approach to poverty alleviation.

17. Recognising that a great majority of these people remain below the poverty line, they evinced keen interest in a "Daal-Bhaat", or assured nutritional standards approach towards the satisfaction of basic needs of the South Asian poor.

18. Deeply conscious that primary education is the cutting edge in the struggle against poverty and the promotion of development, the Heads of State or Government reaffirmed the importance of attaining the target of providing primary education to all children between the ages of 6 - 14 years by the year 2000. They agreed to share their respective experiences and technical expertise to achieve this goal.

19. The Heads of State or Government decided to establish an independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation consisting of eminent persons from each SAARC member state to conduct an in-depth study of diverse experiences of the seven countries on poverty alleviation, and to report to the Seventh Summit, their recommendations on the alleviation of poverty in South Asia.

**TRADE MANUFACTURES AND SERVICES**

20. The Heads of State or Government were pleased to note the establishment of the Committee for Economic Cooperation as an important outcome of the Regional Study on Trade Manufactures and Services. They declared their commitment to the liberalisation of trade in the region through a step by step approach in such a manner that all countries in the region share the benefits of trade expansion equitably.

21. The Heads of State or Government approved that the Inter Governmental Group (IGG) set up on the recommendation of the Committee on Economic Cooperation should formulate and seek agreement on an institutional framework under which specific measures for trade liberalisation among SAARC member-states could be furthered. It should also examine the Sri Lankan proposal to establish a SAARC Preferential Trade Arrangement (SAPTA) by 1997. They directed that the IGG should meet as early as possible and report to the Committee on Economic Cooperation. The Heads of State or Government accepted the offer of the Government of Sri Lanka to host the Second Meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation at Colombo in June/July 1992 at which the report of the Inter Governmental Group would be considered.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

22. The Heads of State or Government recognised that the degradation of the environment has emerged as a major global concern. While the protection of the environment is a common imperative for all humankind, the main responsibility in this regard rests on developed countries since most of the emission of pollutants originates in those countries and since they also have greater capacity for taking or facilitating corrective measures.

23. The Heads of State or Government called on the international community to address the question of unsustainable production and consumption patterns and life-styles which lead to environmental degradation. They were also of the view that environmental standards applicable to developed countries may have excessive and unwarranted economic or social costs if applied in developing countries.

24. Adequate new and additional resources are needed for developing countries to pursue an environmentally sensitive process of development that will banish the underlying causes of environmental degradation - poverty, malnutrition and unemployment. Such resources should be transferred to developing countries on an assured basis together with environmentally sound technology at preferential and concessional terms.

25. The Heads of State or Government expressed their conviction that the framework could be laid for an equitable global partnership of all countries with a view to safeguarding the environment.

26. The Heads of State or Government noted that in preparation for the SAARC Year of the Environment, SAARC countries had taken various national as well as regional measures for the preservation of the environment.

27. The Heads of State or Government expressed their satisfaction at the completion of Regional Study on the Causes and Consequences of Natural Disasters and the Protection and Preservation of Environment. They urged the member countries to promote cooperation amongst themselves for enhancing their respective disaster management capabilities and for undertaking specific work-programmes for protection and preser-

vation of the environment. They endorsed the decision of the Council of Ministers to establish a Committee on Environment to :

- examine the recommendations of the Regional Study
- identify measures for immediate action
- decide on modalities for their implementation,

and welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to hold the first meeting of the Committee in Dhaka.

28. The Heads of State or Government noted with satisfaction the decision of the Standing Committee concerning the time frame to finalise the regional study on the " 'Greenhouse Effect' and its Impact on the Region". They urged member countries to consult each other on key issues concerning climate change, Bio-diversity and Biotechnology, a global consensus on forestry principles, transfer of environmentally sound technology, management of waste and other issues for discussion at Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee and the UNCED in 1992 so that the concerns of SAARC countries could be effectively articulated and projected, keeping in mind their respective national priorities.

29. The Government of India renewed its offer to host a Ministerial Meeting to harmonise the views of SAARC countries on these issues before UNCED 1992. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the offer.

**SHELTER**

30. The Heads of State or Government noted the useful activities conducted during 1991 which was observed as SAARC Year of Shelter. They decided to continue to work towards the global objective of "Shelter for All by the Year 2000".

31. The Heads of State or Government were of the view that Governments should play the critical role of facilitator and supporter of the initiatives of the people and non- governmental agencies in the field of shelter. In this role, they should be involved in the provision of affordable sites with secure tenure, making housing finance available on an affordable and sustainable basis, providing infrastructure development such as water supply and sanitation, energy and waste disposal, increasing the supply of building materials at reasonable prices using indigenous resources, removing constraints to building activities, and creating maximum oppor-

tunities for public participation in decision making and management of shelter activities in the overall context of poverty alleviation. Such activities would be facilitated by the exchange of experience, personnel, research and information among the SAARC countries.

32. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the recommendation on the establishment of a shelter information network to be called "SHELTERNET".

**CHILDREN**

33. The Heads of State or Government accorded the highest priority to the question of child survival, protection and development. They welcomed the adoption of a Plan of Action on Children for South Asia which incorporated relevant recommendations of the World Summit on Children.

34. The Heads of State or Government noted in this context that some member countries had completed their national Plans of Action and urged other member countries to complete their respective Plans. They also urged Member- States to ensure coordinated follow-up action on their respective Plans.

35. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the offer of Sri Lanka to host a Conference on Children in South Asia in 1992 to consider implementation of the regional Plan of Action.

36. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the adoption of the Plan of Action for 1991 - 2000 A.D. as the SAARC Decade of the Girl Child. They requested the Council of Ministers to ensure an annual review of the status of implementation of the Plan of Action during the decade.

**TERRORISM**

37. The Heads of State or Government expressed serious concern on the spread of terrorism in the region affecting the security and stability of all member-states and unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal. They deplored all such acts for their impact on life, property, socio-economic development and political stability as well as on regional and international peace and cooperation.

38. They recognised that cooperation among SAARC States was vital if terrorism was to be prevented and eliminated from the region. In this regard they urged member-states to take all necessary measures to give full effect to their obligations under the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. They stressed in particular, the urgent need for the expeditious enactment of enabling legislation by those member-states which had not yet done so, for the implementation of the Convention and the need for a constant dialogue and interaction among the concerned agencies of member-states, including submission of periodic recommendations to the Council of Ministers.

**SECURITY OF SMALL STATES**

39. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Maldives in drawing the attention of the international community to the protection and security of small states. They noted with satisfaction that the resolution submitted by the Maldives to the United Nations during the 46th Session of the General Assembly and co-sponsored by 65 countries including all the members of SAARC was adopted without a vote. They agreed that small states may be particularly vulnerable to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs and that they merit special measures of support in safeguarding their sovereign independence, territorial integrity and the welfare of their people.

**DRUG TRAFFICKING**

40. The Heads of State or Government noted with satisfaction the increasing regional cooperation in combating the problem of drug trafficking and drug abuse. They expressed serious concern over the growing linkages between drug trafficking, international arms trade and terrorist activities. While expressing satisfaction at the signing of the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic substances at the Fifth SAARC Summit at Male, they urged member-states which had not yet done so to ratify the Convention for its entry into force. They also recognized the need for greater cooperation, including the submission of periodic recommendations to the Council of Ministers.

**PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACT**

41. The Heads of State or Government recalled that important initiatives had been taken at the Bangalore and Kathmandu Summits which had sub-

sequently resulted in the increased involvement of the peoples of South Asia in the process of Regional Cooperation. They welcomed the steps being taken by business organisations/professional bodies, scholars, academics, National Cultural Councils and the media in South Asia to form regional entities/ bodies. They called on the Standing Committee to expedite the formulation of guidelines for extending recognition to such groups and bodies.

**FUND FOR REGIONAL PROJECTS**

**42.** The Heads of State or Government welcomed the setting up of a SAARC Fund for Regional Projects (SFRP) for identification and development of regional projects. They noted that the Fund would be managed by a Regional Council of Development Financing Institutions of the SAARC Member States and that the First Meeting of the Council would take place in India.

**SOUTH ASIAN DEVELOPMENT FUND**

**43.** The Heads of State or Government requested the Secretary-General of SAARC to set up a panel of experts to examine the proposal of His Majesty the King of Bhutan to undertake a pre-feasibility study for the establishment of a South Asian Development Fund, taking into account the views of all member-states.

**SAARC VISA EXEMPTION SCHEME**

**44.** The Heads of State or Government noted with satisfaction that the Scheme in regard to the entitled categories of Members of Parliament, Judges of the Supreme Court, Heads of national academic institutions and the accompanying spouses and dependent children will become operational from 1st March 1992. They called for expeditious action to implement the scheme as well as to consider other categories eligible for exemeption.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**45.** The Heads of State or Government were conscious of the vast potential being afforded by current advances in scientific research for the application of science and technology towards the well-being of the peoples of

South Asia. They agreed that for the South Asian region to derive the maximum benefit, scientific and technological cooperation should transcend national frontiers.

46. Recalling the decision of the Male Summit to institutionalise cooperation in the field of bio-technology, they welcomed the proposal for the establishment of a networking arrangement between Research and Development Centres in the member-states as an important step in advancing such cooperation. They also welcomed the emphasis on organised study tours, workshops and seminars proposed in the identified areas of cooperation in the field of science and technology.

**DATE AND VENUE OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE SAARC HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT**

47. The Heads of State or Government gratefully accepted the offer of the Government of Bangladesh to host the the Seventh SAARC Summit in 1992.

48. The Heads of State or Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan expressed their deep appreciation for the exemplary manner in which the President of Sri Lanka had discharged his responsibilities as Chairman of the Meeting. They expressed their profound gratitude for the warm and gracious hospitality extended to them by the Government and the people of Sri Lanka and for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.

---